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Committee on Relations with the Host Country

Letter dated 30 October 2015 from the Minister Counsellor for Host Country Affairs of the United States Mission to the United Nations addressed to the Chair of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country

I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of the note verbale dated 30 October 2015 from the United States Mission to the United Nations addressed to the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations in response to the latter's note verbale dated 11 September 2015 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country.

(*Signed*) James B. **Donovan**
Minister Counsellor for Host Country Affairs

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Annex to the letter dated 30 October 2015 from the Minister Counsellor for Host Country Affairs of the United States Mission to the United Nations addressed to the Chair of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country

Note verbale dated 30 October 2015 from the United States Mission to the United Nations addressed to the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations

The United States Mission to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations and, with reference to the latter's note verbale dated 11 September 2015, wishes to comment on the question of visas for the events held under the auspices of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) at the United Nations from 29 August to 2 September 2015.

The conferences Ms. Matvienko sought to attend were convened by IPU and not the United Nations, and therefore were not considered to be official United Nations business. Accordingly, the United States had no legal obligation as host country to the United Nations to issue visas for purposes of attending the IPU events.

It is the view of the United States that the references to IPU by the General Assembly in resolution 68/272 do not change the status of IPU or the host country's obligations under the Headquarters Agreement. The fact that the General Assembly spoke favourably about preparations for an IPU conference at United Nations Headquarters did not serve to convert the IPU conference into a meeting of the United Nations.

The United States is mindful of its obligations under the Headquarters Agreement to permit the entry of representatives of members for the purpose of conducting official United Nations business. Accordingly, a visa was issued on 26 August to Ms. Matvienko to attend a United Nations meeting. We understand that Ms. Matvienko chose not to travel to the United States despite receiving the visa. It is public record that Ms. Matvienko has been sanctioned by several countries pertaining to her actions regarding Ukraine.

The United States Mission to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.